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PROPAGANDA REPORT**

GENERAL SHATILOV ON SURPRISE ATOMIC ATTACK:
"A DOUBLE-EDGED WEAPON"

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GENERAL SHATILOV ON SURPRISE ATOMIC ATTACK: "A DOUBLE-EDGED WEAPON"

Summary

1. The possibility of a surprise attack by the USSR with nuclear weapons is publicly introduced into the calculus of Soviet military strategy by Lieutenant General S. Shatilov in an article in LITERARY GAZETTE. Marshal of Armored Troops P. Rotmistrov had argued two months earlier in RED STAR that those advocating a strategy of "active defense" were relying too much on the "constantly operating factors" in war and underestimating the heightened significance of surprise attack in the light of recent military developments; that a surprise nuclear attack could determine the outcome of a war; and that Soviet military policy must be such as "not to permit" such an attack to take place. But Rotmistrov--like Marshals Vasilevsky and Konev, who subsequently stressed the necessity of anticipating and preventing a surprise attack--had stopped short of proposing specific countermeasures. Shatilov, after repeating the major points of Rotmistrov's unprecedented argument, carries that argument to its logical conclusion.
2. In what is perhaps the most threatening pronouncement to appear in a Soviet publication in recent years, Shatilov warns "the all too bellicose admirals and generals of the imperialist camp" that "atomic weapons as well as suddenness of attack are double-edged weapons, and it is hardly sensible to jest with them." Soviet political and military leaders had previously indicated that nuclear weapons were double-edged, but the context had made it clear that what was meant was Soviet retaliation against atomic attack; no Soviet spokesman had so characterized surprise attack and thus intimated, as Shatilov does, that Soviet military strategy might at some point require the USSR to resort to a sudden attack on her enemies.
3. While Shatilov does not say in so many words that the USSR would consider launching a surprise nuclear attack to forestall an anticipated lightning assault by the West, the evidence points most clearly toward this interpretation as against the possibility that his intention was merely to warn of an instantaneous retaliatory Soviet attack after an initial Western blow. Rotmistrov had defined sudden attack as "a weapon of aggressor countries" and the problem confronting Soviet military science as that of "surprise attack on the part of imperialist aggressors," but Shatilov seems intentionally to avoid placing any limitation on the possible authorship of surprise attack; he goes out of his way to justify his contention that surprise attack is a double-edged weapon, invoking a rarely used quotation from Lenin to legitimize the use of "all means and practices of fighting which the enemy may have"; and for the stereotyped phrase "if the aggressors attack us..." he substitutes "if they impose war on us," implying by the less precise terminology that a situation could arise in which the Soviet Union, believing itself forced to go to war, might deem it advantageous to strike the first blow.

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4. Shatilov's article takes on added significance by virtue of his position as Deputy Chief of the Main Political Administration, apparently the Party Central Committee's extension into the army. His repetition of the argument advanced by Rotmistrov, a Soviet marshal, implies endorsement by the Central Committee of Rotmistrov's views on the importance of surprise attack as a potentially decisive factor in war. His warning about the double-edged character of sudden attack suggests not only that the USSR does not rule out the possibility of launching a preventive surprise assault, but that it has actively incorporated this possibility into its military calculus with Central Committee backing.

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GENERAL SHATILOV ON SURPRISE ATOMIC ATTACK: "A DOUBLE-EDGED WEAPON"

Lieutenant General S. Shatilov, in the appended article published in LITERARY GAZETTE on 28 May, publicly introduces into the calculus of Soviet military strategy the possibility of a surprise attack by the USSR with nuclear weapons. The ostensible occasion for the article was a conference on the development of literary works on military subjects, announced in LITERARY GAZETTE on 17 May as scheduled for the end of the month with Ministry of Defense participation. That it had a broader purpose seems clear from its military-technical nature and from the slight attention it devotes to strictly literary problems.*

The article repeats the major points of an argument first presented by Marshal of Armored Troops P. Rotmistrov in a 24 March article in RED STAR, the organ of the Defense Ministry. Since Shatilov is Deputy Chief of the Main Political Administration--apparently the extension of the Party Central Committee into the Army--his repetition of these crucial points implies endorsement of them by the Central Committee. Shatilov goes even further than Rotmistrov did, spelling out the necessary conclusion to be derived from the latter's incomplete argument and thus making more forceful the implication of Central Committee backing for Rotmistrov's views.

"Active Defense" Strategy Repudiated

Both writers present their argument in the form of a critique of previous military writings--Shatilov adding, for the benefit of the literary conference, the category of fiction--and in both articles the erring authors are criticized for lack of originality and failure to take into account recent developments in military affairs, particularly nuclear weapons and the means of their delivery. The substance of the argument is that the earlier authors have failed, in particular, to take into account the fact that these new military developments have greatly heightened the importance of surprise attack in determining the outcome of a future war; even in the past, surprise was a more significant factor than previous writers have allowed, particularly in causing very severe--and, implicitly, unnecessary--setbacks for the Red Army in the early days of World War II; in the present situation a surprise atomic attack could, under certain conditions, determine the outcome of a future war, and this is precisely the strategy of the "imperialists," who hope to initiate war with a surprise attack and achieve a "lightning" victory; such a strategy is actually forced upon the "imperialists," since in a prolonged war the weaknesses in their rear and in their economies would preclude "decisive" victory; they would not be deterred by humane considerations, since they are capable of any "crime."

Thus, according to Shatilov and Rotmistrov, the following elements must be considered in appraising the situation as regards a surprise atomic attack against the USSR:

* LITERARY GAZETTE has in the past been used as a vehicle for critical political and military articles, most recently (1 February) for an article on "Atomic and Conventional Arms" by Major General N. Talensky, chief editor of MILITARY THOUGHT. Like Shatilov's current article, Talensky's was not broadcast, although it later appeared in the first issue of the new multi-language journal INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS.

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1. Such an attack is technically possible, owing to new developments in the means of waging war.
2. The "imperialists" are inclined toward such a strategy because of the weaknesses which would hamper them in a prolonged war.
3. The decision to implement such a strategy would be made solely on the basis of cold calculation for the achievement of aggressive purposes, independently of any moral considerations.
4. Such an attack could, under certain conditions, result in the decisive defeat of the Soviet Union.

This argument has never before been advanced in a Soviet publication. The "erroneous" position with respect to Soviet military strategy which Rotmistrov and Shatilov set out to rebut, while not coherently delineated in either article, can be reconstructed from the reasoning used to discredit it. The apparent substance of the positions is the contention that the Soviet Union could successfully resist a surprise attack and go on to victory as in World War II--a contention based on the argument that "surprise" is a "fortuitous and temporary factor" whereas the outcome of war is determined by "constantly operating factors" such as stability of the rear, an effective economy, and so forth.* It would appear that Soviet military writers have encouraged the view that if the USSR were suddenly attacked in a future war it would again be able to gain victory because the Soviet Union emphasizes the constant factors in war while the "imperialists" neglect them in favor of the "fortuitous" and "transitory" element of surprise.

Against this position Rotmistrov and Shatilov argue with a forcefulness which suggests that their frank expression of views may have long been suppressed:

1. Both writers maintain that the terrible Soviet reverses in the early part of World War II have been so minimized in military literature that the resultant erroneous version of events endangers Soviet planning and fosters wrong popular expectations regarding any future war. This "false" view of history is barely touched upon by Rotmistrov, but is demolished by Shatilov in a manner which suggests his resentment at its proponents.

There can be no two opinions on the proposition that if the Hitlerite command had not had this important advantage--even though temporarily--events at the front would have taken an entirely different turn. In this connection it must be pointed out that our literature on the Great Fatherland War often portrays and idealizes the initial stages of the war as a classic form of defense--so-called "active defense"--and that in addition authors are trying, in contradiction to reality, to portray the events themselves as

* This principle of war was first enunciated by Stalin in May 1942 after the German invasion, at a time when the Germans had failed to win a blitz victory but when the prospects for Soviet victory were still dim. While it may initially have been intended to serve as a morale-builder during the period of uncertainty, it was elevated after the war to the stature of a military dogma and was reiterated by high military authority as late as the last days of the Stalin regime (Sokolovsky in RED STAR on 23 February 1953).

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if "active defense" had been planned ahead of time and was included in the considerations of our command; in fact the initial stages of the war, constituting a sudden enemy invasion with numerical superiority in tanks and planes, were unfavorable for our country and its Army which...experienced the bitterness of withdrawal.*

A primitive interpretation of the initial period of the war, perverting living reality in any sector, be it in fiction or scientific works, cannot be tolerated since it distorts historic truth and informs our people erroneously, creating the impression that similar events might occur in the future and that they are desirable. The experience of the Great Fatherland war...show/s/ that the significance of the element of surprise in modern conditions has not only not lessened but on the contrary has become more important.

Shatilov clearly indicates that the early course of the war was not in accordance with the plans of the Soviet military but was forced upon them. Besides hinting at his resentment over the bad position in which the Soviet military found themselves because of failure to anticipate the surprise blow, Shatilov attacks the use made by his opponents of their version of the early events of the war to argue "that similar events might occur in the future and that they are desirable."

2. Both argue that if the surprise factor showed itself "more important" in World War II, it is much more so at the present time, for it could decide the outcome of the war. According to Rotmistrov,

it must be said frankly that in certain circumstances, a surprise attack in the form of an atomic- or hydrogen-weapon attack might be the deciding factor in achieving success not only in the initial period of war but in the war as a whole. Surprise attack by the imperialist aggressors may bring them considerable success, especially in those circumstances when it is carried out against states which cannot put up a long enough resistance because of weaknesses in their economy or as a result of an unfavorable geographic position.

Shatilov compresses the same point into a shorter statement which nevertheless retains the word "especially," indicating that the USSR as well as less favorably situated countries might suffer decisive defeat from a surprise atomic attack.

3. Both writers vigorously criticize the dogma--which, paradoxically, had a place in their own argument on the likelihood of an "imperialist" surprise attack--that the West concentrates on the surprise element in its strategy to the neglect of "constantly operating factors." Rotmistrov explicitly attacks this view at some length. Shatilov, after affirming the importance of the constant factors, briefly notes that

* Marshal Zhukov has also seemed to resent the view uniformly presented in previous Soviet discussions of these events (See SURVEY OF USSR BROADCASTS, 12 May 1955). Marshal Sokolovsky, in his V-E Day article in RED STAR called particularly for intensive study of the early stages of the German invasion of the USSR.

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underrating the potential power of aggressive states can cause contrary results and spread an erroneous, distorted picture of the nature of the difficulties to be encountered in war and ways of obtaining victory.

Thus they dispute the notion that the USSR, after absorbing an initial blow, could readily defeat the enemy because he had neglected the "constantly operating factors" which might ultimately determine the victory.

Soviet Surprise Attack Possible

The repudiation of the strategy of "active defense," first developed by a Soviet marshal in the organ of the Defense Ministry, has thus been restated by a high functionary of the Central Committee and presented directly to Soviet publicists who are responsible, through their control of literature, for the attitudes of the Soviet public. As is apparent from the presentation of the argument, Shatilov has addressed himself to the problem with greater freedom and fewer inhibitions than the professional soldier, and he has gone further in drawing implications from the argument for Soviet military--and presumably political--policy.

Rotmistrov's article was itself the culmination of various approaches to the question by high political leaders who have in the past been associated with Soviet military affairs. Concern over the possibility of a surprise atomic attack by the United States against the USSR was first prominently publicized by Marshal Bulganin in his 21 July 1954 Warsaw speech while he was still Minister of Defense.* Bulganin's warning had been anticipated by Marshal Vasilevsky in a 7 May 1954 RED STAR article which stated that Soviet troops must be held "in a state of fighting preparedness so that nothing unexpected can catch us unawares." Four days after Bulganin's statement, Admiral Kuznetsov issued a warning in PRAVDA which was similar to Vasilevsky's. This sequence of statements, made only by officials of the Defense Ministry, suggests that Bulganin's may have been in response to requests by professional military leaders. There were no further allusions by top Soviet leaders to the need for preparations to meet a surprise attack until late in December, after the Moscow Conference on European Security and the NATO Council decision to use nuclear weapons. On 31 December Voroshilov, a former Commissar of War who served in an active military capacity during the Civil War and who presumably retains close contact with Soviet military problems, warned "a large group of generals, admirals and officers" that

contrary to the will of their peoples, the reactionary circles of certain states are organizing an arms race, building aggressive blocs and restoring German militarism. Under these conditions we must show great vigilance and always be on guard so that no unexpected events can take us unawares.

Up to this point, however, no military or political leader had suggested appropriate countermeasures to ward off the surprise attack which the enemy was supposed to be contemplating. Rotmistrov's article appears to have represented a tentative resolution of controversy over this question in Soviet military circles. He presented his views as personal ("in our opinion," "we cannot agree"), and while he sought to overwhelm his opponents with precise and frank arguments he was imprecise in indicating the conclusions to be drawn for Soviet military policy.

* See Radio Propaganda Report IP.18, 4 August 1954, "Bulganin's Speech in Warsaw: Nuclear Weapons and the Chance of a U.S. Attack."

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The task consists in not permitting a surprise attack, in not being overrun unexpectedly. But this is possible only under conditions of the greatest vigilance, of a high and constant state of combat readiness of the troops--the kind of readiness which makes it possible to unmask any of the aggressor's intrigues and to destroy them.*

The statement that the aggressor's intrigues must be quashed and that a surprise attack must not be permitted could mean that the attack, if it comes, must not in fact come as a "surprise," or it could mean that the attacker must be destroyed before he can act. Rotmistrov in effect ruled out the latter interpretation by defining surprise attack as a weapon of the imperialists. The V-E Day statements by Marshals Konev and Vasilevsky similarly stressed only the necessity of anticipating and preventing a surprise attack on the USSR and, like Rotmistrov, stopped short of proposing specific countermeasures. Konev, speaking at the Bolshoi Theater on 8 May, said:

The Soviet Union and the People's Democracies must be vigilant and take necessary measures...in order to avert any eventualities (sluchainostei) and provocations and in order to prevent the possibility of sudden aggression from any quarter.

Writing in IZVESTIA (8 May) Vasilevsky said that the USSR bears in mind "the imperialists' perfidious way of acting" and has drawn the appropriate conclusions:

The USSR possesses at present everything that would be necessary, in the event of a new war being unleashed, to deprive the aggressor of any advantages he could enjoy thanks to preparations made in due time for an aggression, as well as to the suddenness and treachery of such an aggression.

Shatilov seems to resolve this ambiguity in favor of an anticipatory surprise attack by the USSR whenever it might appear necessary. In what might be considered the most threatening pronouncement to appear in a Soviet publication in recent years, he warns "the all-too-bellicose admirals and generals of the imperialist camp" that

it would pay them to remember well that atomic weapons as well as suddenness of attack vnezapnost deystviy are double-edged weapons, and it is hardly sensible to jest with them.

Soviet political and military leaders had previously indicated that nuclear weapons were double-edged weapons, but the context had made it clear that what was meant was Soviet retaliation against an atomic attack. Shatilov introduces a new element, the notion that suddenness of attack as well as the use of atomic weapons is double-edged, intimating the necessity for Soviet as well as Western recognition that Soviet military strategy might at some point require the USSR to resort to a sudden atomic attack upon her enemies.

While Shatilov's formulation goes well beyond anything said previously on this question, an element of ambiguity still remains in his statement: He does not say in so many words that the USSR would consider launching a surprise nuclear attack to forestall an anticipated surprise assault upon itself by the West,

* A 20 May broadcast to the Soviet armed forces (Radio Volga) may have been a reflection of the impact of Rotmistrov's article on Soviet military training.

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3. Shatilov

and his language leaves open the possibility that he is merely warning the West of an instantaneous retaliatory nuclear attack by the USSR after initial action by the West. On balance, it would appear that Shatilov meant to indicate that preventive rather than retaliatory "surprise" attack had entered into Soviet military calculations:

1. Nowhere in his article does Shatilov suggest that recourse to an initial surprise attack is a weapon only of non-socialist states. The only previous extended discussion of "surprise" as a factor in nuclear war was in the article by Rotmistrov, who explicitly accepted the thesis that "surprise attack is a weapon of aggressor countries" as one which is "absolutely correct and cannot raise any sort of doubt"; and at several points he indicated that the question at issue for Soviet military science was "the problem of surprise attack on the part of imperialist aggressors." Shatilov, who followed Rotmistrov closely on so many other points in the argument, seems intentionally to have avoided placing any limitation on the possible authorship of surprise attack. Therefore the apparently ambiguous statement--addressed rhetorically to the West--that sudden attack is a double-edged weapon must have been intended as a warning that the USSR at least does not rule out the possibility of launching a surprise attack.
2. Shatilov goes out of his way to justify his contention that "suddenness of attack" is a double-edged weapon, immediately following it with a rarely used quotation from Lenin:

The Soviet people remember well the injunction of the great teacher, V. I. Lenin, who wrote: "Anyone will agree that it would be stupid and even criminal of any army if it does not train to use all types of weapons, all means and practices of fighting which the enemy may have."*

If Shatilov meant only to assert that the USSR would be justified in retaliating quickly against a surprise atomic attack from the West, he would have had no evident reason for invoking the Soviet oracle--and one of his rarely used pronouncements at that--to legitimize his assertion that sudden attack is a double-edged weapon. His use of the quotation suggests that he invoked Lenin's name to make palatable an idea which the Soviet public would find inherently repulsive--the initiation of a war by surprise atomic attack if Soviet leaders should deem it necessary.

* The only other known use of this quotation is in the article by Rotmistrov, who introduces it cautiously ("In this connection it would not be out of place to recall the instruction of V. I. Lenin....") after this sentence: "While developing and advancing our own Soviet military science, we must also be familiar with bourgeois military science, know its basic concepts, its judgments on the ways and means of armed struggle, and its principles of organizing and employing its armed forces." Thus Rotmistrov, by following up this statement with the quotation from Lenin justifying possession of the same "ways and means" of fighting as one's opponent has, seems also to envisage the incorporation of a possible USSR surprise attack into Soviet military plans, despite his attribution of this strategy elsewhere in the article to the imperialists.

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3. Shatilov at one point uses the phrase "If the aggressors impose war on us..." instead of the almost invariable "if they attack us," implying by the less precise terminology that a situation could arise in which the Soviet Union, believing itself forced to go to war, would find it advantageous to strike the first blow in the form of a surprise attack. Shatilov elsewhere denies that the Soviet Union is "threatening or preparing to attack anyone," but this disclaimer of intent to commit aggression need not be interpreted as a denial of intent to strike first in a war "imposed" on the USSR.

While a definitive determination of Shatilov's entire meaning is not yet possible, the evidence points most clearly toward the interpretation that his statement about the double-edged character of sudden attack was intended to inform the Soviet public and the Soviet military--as well as Western leaders--that the USSR not only does not rule out the possibility of launching a preventive surprise attack under given circumstances, but that it has actively incorporated this possibility into its military calculus.

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"AN IMPORTANT AND NOBLE THEME": ARTICLE IN LITERARY GAZETTE
 BY LIEUTENANT GENERAL S. SHATILOV, 28 MAY 1955

The Soviet people are proud that a powerful multinational fiction literature has been created in our country embodying the most advanced contemporary ideas. These literary works constitute an inexhaustible treasury of the spiritual values of our heroic people which have played and continue to play a great and noble part in educating the new man and strengthening the moral-political unity of the Soviet people, as well as in the struggle for building Communism.

Soviet artistic literature owes all its remarkable successes to the inspiring role of the Communist Party and its constant attention to the flourishing of our socialist culture. The Communist Party teaches that it is an important and honorable task to educate youth--young workers, kolkhozniks, members of the intelligentsia, soldiers of the Soviet Army and Navy--in the spirit of love for labor, bravery, fearlessness, confidence in the victory of the great cause of Communism, unquestioning fidelity to the socialist motherland, and constant readiness to deliver a crushing blow against imperialist aggressors if they try to violate the peaceful life of our people.

The imperialist reactionary forces led by the U.S. industrial and financial circles have made not a few attempts to overthrow the Soviet system and prevent our people from building a new life. Only the forms and methods have changed in their anti-Soviet undermining work. One of the inveterate inspirers of the anti-Soviet policy of the imperialist states, hard-boiled warmonger Churchill, cynically stated recently that both he and the former British troop commander in Europe, Field Marshal Montgomery, were preparing as far back as ten years ago to arm the remnants of the defeated German Wehrmacht for a war against the Soviet Union.

Today the reactionary rulers of the imperialist states openly talk of invading the USSR. They surround our country with military bases, create military blocs, reassemble and rearm the forces of the defeated Hitlerite armies, send over agents to conduct espionage and diversion, and engage in a monstrous arms race. In 156 years of its history, including the Second World War, the United States put 180 billion dollars into military expenditures. But during the last nine years, from 1946 to 1954, it put more than 350 billion dollars into direct military expenditures.

It is quite understandable that the people of the camp of peace, democracy and socialism cannot let such facts go unnoticed. They have taken account of their own forces and are strengthening the struggle for peace and adopting other corresponding measures. One such measure in response, which imperialist adventurers of all kinds should heed and study well, is contained in the historic decision adopted in Warsaw.

The great Lenin taught our Party and our people to guard the armed forces of our country like the apple of our eye. Following this wise testament the CPSU has created, educated, and tempered the powerful Army and Navy which have proved their incomparable moral qualities--an inflexible fighting spirit, discipline, endurance, and a high degree of military art. The Soviet soldier--embodying the remarkable spiritual features of our people, the creator of the socialist society--is not the same as "the man with arms" who during the period of the exploiters' society was used to act against the people, to defend the

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power and riches of the good-for-nothing groups from the anger and protests of the people; that man is hated by the people, who see in him an enemy and oppressor. The soldiers of the imperialist armies are educated in a spirit of savage hatred of man and servility to the interests of the ruling classes. The armed forces of the imperialist states, and above all of the United States and Britain, are instruments for strengthening the power of monopoly, tools of aggression, a means of national and colonial oppression. They are armies of robbery and plunder, murder, and enslavement both of their own nations and of other peoples. They are being trained by the U.S. and British ruling circles for a plundering war against the peaceful nations, especially against the USSR and the People's Democracies.

Our "armed men" do not threaten anyone. They are educated in the spirit of respect for the workers of all countries; and if anyone ever must beware of them, it is only those who breathe hostility and hatred toward our system of life, those who still wish to accomplish what broke the neck of Hitler and others like him.

The people are the main basis of our Army and Navy, whose personnel are of the people, defend the people's cause, and are educated in the spirit of Soviet patriotism and high political consciousness, knowing where to go and what to fight for. An army having at its disposal such personnel, inspired by the great ideas of the Communist Party, is invincible, just as invincible as the cause for which it stands; such an army is capable of producing thousands of heroes time and time again, heroes like Matrosov and Castello, Pokryshkin and Kozhedub, to show mass courage, initiative and creativeness, fighting vigor and an inflexible will to victory.

The Communist Party has always devoted much attention to the political education and ideological tempering of our military personnel. The Party teaches that in modern conditions, when military art has undergone considerable qualitative changes and when military action is even more tense and fierce, the role of man in war, the role of his moral and physical strength, military training and art assumes even greater significance. The Soviet soldier is strong not only in his spiritual and moral qualities but also in the remarkable military equipment supplied to him by the people. Thanks to the successes achieved through the development of socialist heavy industry, Soviet science and engineering, the fighting power of our Army, aviation and Navy has grown immeasurably.

The Communist Party and Soviet Government have done considerable work in recent years in order to retain the superiority gained by Soviet arms over the arms of the capitalist countries. The Soviet land armies have equipment many times better than that used in the last war, including firearms, powerful artillery installations (moshchnyye artilleriyevskiy systemi) and the latest armored and other means of fighting.

The infantry in the former sense no longer exists. Today it moves in trucks and armored transport vehicles and has powerful firearms. Our aviation is armed with modern jet planes capable of great speeds and possessing high combat and technical qualities. Our planes have the latest radio-location and other equipment capable of intercepting enemy planes and engaging in combat at any time and in any weather.

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The Soviet Navy has first-class surface and submarine vessels of the most perfect design and long operational range, equipped with modern arms and technology, such cruisers as the "Sverdlov," "Ordzenikidze," and "Ushakov," built since the war. Other units have earned themselves the reputation of the best ships in the world, while the excellent training, discipline and organization of the crews have been highly rated abroad.

The constant development of heavy industry and Soviet science have contributed to the liquidation of the U.S. monopoly in atomic weapons and the Soviet people's mastering of the secrets of the hydrogen bomb and other latest weapons. At present we have every basis for stating that the level of battle-readiness of our armed forces is at the degree required by the interests of the Soviet state, by the international situation and by the developments in military art.

The development of military technology and the appearance of new means of combat have always caused definite changes in the tactics and organization of forces and required a new approach toward solving some military problems. We must base our actions on reality, on a deep and all-sided analysis of the modern state of the armed forces both of our country and of the imperialist camp insofar as it concerns the training of our service personnel, the propagating of Soviet military ideology and science, and the artistic portrayal of the processes taking place in the Army and Navy.

At the present time the element of surprise in modern warfare assumes great significance. It has played a considerable part also in past wars, but its significance has grown in step with the size and mobility of armies, the development of the power of their arms and the striking power at their disposal which became more destructive and capable of reaching not only troops and objectives in the immediate proximity of the frontline but also objectives and reserves in the far rear. Suddenness of invasion during the Second World War had a considerable influence on the destinies of several European states enslaved by Hitlerite Germany. Our Army, which also experienced this factor as a result of the treacherous and sudden invasion by fascist regiments which had been earlier in a state of dispersal, was forced at first to wage fierce defensive battles and to evacuate important economic areas. There can be no two opinions on the proposition that if the Hitlerite command had not had this important advantage--even though temporarily--events at the front would have taken an entirely different turn.

In this connection it must be pointed out that our literature on the Great Fatherland War often portrays and idealizes the initial stages of the war as a classic form of defense--so-called "active defense"--and that in addition authors are trying, in contradiction to reality, to portray the events themselves as if "active defense" had been planned ahead of time and was included in the considerations of our command; in fact the initial stages of the war, constituting a sudden enemy invasion with numerical superiority in tanks and planes, were unfavorable for our country and its Army which, in spite of the stubbornness and bravery of its soldiers, defending every inch of native soil, experienced the bitterness of withdrawal. A primitive interpretation of the initial period of the war, perverting living reality in any sector, be it in fiction or scientific works, cannot be tolerated since it distorts historic truth and informs our people erroneously, creating the impression that similar events might occur in the future and that they are desirable.

The experience of the Great Fatherland War and subsequent development of military art show that the significance of the element of surprise in modern conditions has not only not lessened but on the contrary has become more important.

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A modern army's equipment includes atom and hydrogen bombs, jet aviation capable of very long-range flights, all kinds of pilotless devices, radio-location, television, and other types of weapons and military equipment; their use brings the invading side tremendous gains and in a number of cases also decisive success, especially if the country subject to sudden invasion is poor economically or small in size.

Some American-British military leaders of the Gruenther and Montgomery type rely on the sudden use of atomic weapons against the Soviet Union and People's Democracies. Thus they dream of shortening the war and achieving "lightning" destruction of the enemy.

The prospect of a prolonged war frightens the imperialist aggressors, since they have no confidence in the stability of their rear and the capacity of their economy to withstand the stress of a long war. It is difficult for them to hide from their people the unjust and plundering nature of war. Knowing the savage nature of the aggressors, we cannot fail to examine the plans which they are making. The Soviet Union is not threatening or preparing to attack anyone. But those who think they will find us passive or unprepared to repel the aggressor will be deeply disappointed. It would pay the all too bellicose admirals and generals of the imperialist camp to remember well that atomic weapons as well as suddenness of attack (vnezapnost deystviy) are double-edged weapons, and it is hardly sensible to jest with them.

The Soviet people remember well the injunction of the great teacher V.I. Lenin, who wrote: "Anyone will agree that it would be stupid and even criminal for any army not to train to use all types of weapons, all means and practices of fighting which the enemy may have."

Soviet military science, taking into account the growing role of suddenness, is not at all inclined to underrate the role of the constant factors which decide the outcome of wars. The wise policy of the Communist Party and Soviet Government insures a steady rise of the economy and further strengthening of the worker-peasant alliance, and reinforces the friendship of the peoples of the USSR. This means that in case of war, if the aggressors dare to unleash it, our state will dispose of an even more powerful economy and of the moral possibilities necessary for destroying an enemy.

Soviet military science has always been based on a sober, realistic evaluation of its own forces and possibilities as well as those at the disposal of the opponent. The correct assessment of both the weak and strong points of the opponent is of exceptional significance for all-sided preparation of the country to repel an aggressor and for correct organization of the training and education of the Soviet armed forces personnel. On the other hand, underrating the potential power of aggressive states can cause contrary results and spread an erroneous, distorted picture of the nature of the difficulties to be encountered in war and ways of obtaining victory.

If the aggressors impose war on us we shall have to fight against a strong opponent enjoying a high degree of maneuverability, equipped with all types of modern weapons and capable of committing any crime for the sake of reaching its plundering goal. It would be incorrect to imagine the aggressor as weak and without will, to create an illusion that victory would not require much effort by the Army and the entire nation. The opinion that bourgeois countries allegedly have no military science cannot be regarded as a serious one, nor

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can the view that they have no new discoveries or that there is nothing to learn from them. Such opinions can only breed a sense of false security, complacency, conceit, and false self-confidence. It can cause harm to the defense capacity of the country. We must study the content of bourgeois science critically, taking into account its reactionary, social, political and methodological character. At the same time we must attentively study the development and methods of the use of military equipment, weapons and military art.

Our literary works on military subjects should acquaint the reader through fiction with the strong and weak sides of the bourgeois armies and science; they must instill in Soviet troops high moral-fighting qualities such as bravery, fearlessness, constant vigilance, and a desire to perfect their military art and learn, in fact, how to conquer.

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